

**Town of Arlington  
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Wednesday, December 19, 2001 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Richard Bento, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Larry Englisher, Lt. Jim McHugh, Michael Rademacher, Scott Smith, Ed Starr, David Walkinshaw

Others: Chris Ballman, Alan Jones, Stephen Makowka, Sudhir Murthy, Ray Bradley, Paolo Marinelli, Curt Troutman, Sara Whitford.

**Minutes from 11/14**

The minutes of this meeting were approved unanimously.

**Future meeting dates**

We agreed that meetings in 2002 would be on the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:15 PM, in the second floor conference room of Town Hall annex (unless otherwise noted). Therefore, meetings for 2002 are scheduled for 1/8, 2/12, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14, 6/11 (First floor conference room on 6/11), 7/9, 8/13, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10.

**Russell Street (7:40 PM – 8:50 PM)**

Michael Rademacher arrived during this discussion.

Elisabeth Carr-Jones presented the recommendations of the working group

1. A crosswalk and stop line on the Court Street extension at Water Street was approved unanimously.
2. Pedestrian use of the Court Street extension. There may not be enough room to safely separate pedestrians and vehicles (i.e. via a painted line). However, unlike most roadways in Arlington (where pedestrians are expected to be on the sidewalk, except when crossing the roadway), this is a space that is shared by pedestrians and motorists. The committee unanimously recommended that DPW post cautionary signs to remind motorists that this alley is a shared space with pedestrians.
3. Water Street Connector and Water Street. Given the substantial pedestrian use of the bikeway, DPW is planning to treat the bikeway/street intersections (including Water Street) more like crosswalks. Rich Bento advised against trying to increase the radius of the corner. The current radius has a traffic calming effect. The committee unanimously agreed that enhancement of warning signs and markings would be appropriate.
4. Mill Street / Water Street. Our unanimous recommendation is to remove the brush that is impeding visibility, and delay a decision regarding further measures (such as a stop sign) until after construction in the area is complete.

5. Russell Street traffic speed and volume. Jim McHugh noted that some of the speeds reported in the speed study may be too high. Given the location of the counter (near Mystic Street), these speeds may be unrealistic. Scott Smith noted that before any major traffic calming measure (such as the alternate side parking) be implemented, the Selectmen would need to be sure that a majority of affected residents did in fact support it. We unanimously approved the following recommendations:
  - At this time, not to pursue speed humps at this location. The steep grade makes their use problematic.
  - Increased police enforcement
  - Ask DPW to develop a plan for alternate side of the street parking
  - Plant street trees in the empty tree cutouts
  - Post a 25 mph speed limit (pending successful Home Rule petition)
6. Library Way/Water Street crosswalk After some discussion, the committee unanimously approved the following recommendations:
  - Removal of one parking space at Mass. Ave and Water (by Domino's) to improve visibility to the crosswalk
  - Ask DPW to investigate further measures, including bump outs, overhead warning signs, and possible removal of one parking space on Mass Ave by the library.
7. Delineation of the Winslow/Water St Connector/Russell Terrace intersection. Rich reported that DPW has successfully been using plastic bollards at Paul Revere Road. The committee unanimously recommended that DPW try the same technique at this intersection.
8. Bikeway connection. This was addressed in point (3) above. Rich noted that current plans call for the bikeway to be resurfaced in the spring.
9. Lengthening left turn signal from Mass Ave to Mystic (this also lengthens the right turn signal from Mystic to Mass Ave). This affects the Arlington Center intersection, which is already being considered by the Redevelopment Board. We can consider lengthening this left turn signal as part of their work.

## **Magnolia Street**

Several TAC members visited the area during the last few months. Traffic appears to be light, with moderately dense on-street parking. There appears to be some commuter parking (perhaps 10 cars), mainly on Herbert Road and Thorndike Street. An one side of the street regulation was tried in 1977, but was discontinued after a short period.

Unanimous recommendations were as follows

- Directed police patrol for speeding vehicles
- Continue enforcement of the overnight parking ban
- No change in current parking restrictions

## **Follow up on other areas**

Jason Street: Of the locations reviewed by the committee thus far, it appears that the crosswalk at Jason and Brantwood may be an appropriate location for a raised crossing,

provided that residents want it. It carries high vehicular and pedestrian volume, and is reasonably level. We agreed to ask DPW to develop a cost proposal, with due consideration for time, budget and schedule.

One possible item for Town Meeting is an appropriation of funds to continue the design study.

Ralph Elwell mentioned the possibility of redesigning TAC, and agreed to share his thoughts by e-mail.

### **Louis Berger Group Activities:**

Sudhir Murthy reported

1. Crosstown buses. The town already has limited paratransit, provided by the Council on Aging, the School Committee (vans used for special needs students), SCM and the Ride. Preliminary indications are that a crosstown bus service would cost \$200,000 per year.
2. Roadway functional classes. Copies of the map of functional classes will be available to committee members from Ron Santosuosso's office. The roadway classifications presented, which were from the State maps, were as follows:  
Arterials: Route 2, Massachusetts, Pleasant, Broadway, Mystic, Medford

Minor Arterials: Lake, Warren, Mystic Valley Parkway, Summer, Mill, Grove, Brattle, Concord Turnpike. Park, Park Extension, Lowell, Forest (north of Summer)

Collectors: Gardner, Bates, River, Webster, Jason (north of Gray), Gray, Highland, Hutchinson, Lantern, Washington, Forest (south of Summer), Eastern, Oakland, Dow, Valentine, Appleton

3. He noted that the Town of Concord has a form for requesting traffic calming improvements. They require a combination of excessive speed and cut-through traffic before traffic calming is considered.
4. Plans for the Jason Street area include a license plate survey on Jason. This will enable census blocks to be obtained from CTPS.
5. He presented a map of sidewalk conditions throughout the town.
6. He handed out comments from the public meetings (big issues were pedestrian safety and cut-through traffic) and preliminary results from the Mass Ave. corridor study.

### **Presentations to the Selectmen**

We agreed that reports to the Selectmen need to be more concise, with one report going to the Selectmen, rather than separate reports from TAC, the Police and DPW. Ed Starr will speak with Jack Hurd about process.

## **Web site**

Alan Jones outlined a possible organization for the TAC web site, to include the following areas:

- Agenda and minutes
- Materials presented at Selectmen's meetings (to be posted after the Selectmen have received them)
- Informational and instructional materials (such as how to bring a transportation issue before the Town)
- Educational materials
- Frequently asked questions

## **Meeting plans**

TAC issues seem to be falling into two areas: neighborhood requests from the Selectmen, and longer term activities (such as the Mass Ave. corridor study). With a large number of neighborhood requests, the longer term activities are receiving short shrift. One idea is to hold separate meetings for the neighborhood requests, thus leaving more time during the regular TAC meetings for the important longer term activities.

**The meeting adjourned at 10:50 PM.**

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## **MEETING HANDOUTS**

Agenda, and schedule of future meetings – from Ed Starr

Minutes of 11/14 – from Scott Smith

Russell Street Neighborhood and Magnolia Street Reports – from Elisabeth Carr-Jones

Summarized Town Day survey results – from Scott Smith

Notes on Speeding and Children at Play signs – from Rich Bento

Summary of Comments from Residents from LBG.

Preliminary Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Study results from Rich Bento

Arlington Transportation Assessment Study notes – from Sudhir Murthy